

[In one of the numerous sections]

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TOPIC Study of Folklore in the Berkshires Colrain

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In one of the numerous sections of Colrain, lives an unusual old fellow separated from the community by his eccentricities and by his own choice. Yet he sees almost everyone in whole town in his work which he has done since he was a boy and everyone knows him at least by sight.

Altho not of native stock, Lyman Faulkner, was brought to Colrain as a child and has spent his entire life here. Lyman's home and small farm are located in the small settlement known as Foundry Village. This is a vaguely determined portion of Colrain on the left bank of the North River between two of the villages covered bridges, which are fast becoming a rarity. The section is not actually prosperous looking now. The residents are frugal but they have little excess money to spend on more than the absolutely necessary repairs and so most of the homes are sadly in need of paint and modernizing. Most of the places are neat and apparently well kept. There is the usual litter around the small farm house of course which with some look "just used and waiting in a convenient place to be used again immediately." With others, implements, wagons, buggies, harnesses harnesses and farm machinery look old and neglected. Grass and weeds grow unhampered and one has the impression of dirt laden cob webs. Such is Lyman's Faulkner's farm house. Four or five old beehives stand in a line on a brush and weed covered bank behind the house. They no longer are hives for bees except perhaps a few wasps. The house wood - the fire wood seems to have had all the attention. This is stacked about in various sized piles chopped into different 2 sizes. It lines the walls of the old sheds, roof high in some places and only

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one tier in other places. Small chips and sawdust have raised the level of the ground floor somewhat but a glance shows most of the largest chips picked up meticulously for use in kindling their fires.

The house has a rather deserted air in the winter for Lyman lives in the house alone. In the spring Lyman's younger sister, Mrs. Blanche Cooper, comes back to the home where they lived so long and the place takes on a new appearance. Mrs. Cooper is an intelligent, industrious woman.

Her first husband died when she was still young leaving her with a baby girl. He had left her some money but she preferred to come back to her old home with her mother and brother, Lyman. Later she married again. This time she had one son. When Mr. Cooper died, she again came home.

Her son has grown up and married and has a family now as her daughter and so she spends her time with all of them. She chooses to "visit out"

mostly in the winter time because she finds little of interest for her in Colrain then. Apparently however she is needed at Lyman's home. He does little work inside the house and confines his activities in the house mainly to the kitchen. Just before she arrives however Lyman has a spectacular cleaning process when table runners come off for a washing (not an ironing however), rugs are swept and dust accumulations are swished out. The neighbors know about how soon "Blanche" is coming when they see Lyman begin his housework.

The story of the Faulkner (pronounced "Fortner" for some unknown reason) family is typical of a great many of the families of Colrain 3 and the surrounding towns. They are old "Yankees", kept pure by choice and still immensely proud of the fact that they are "thoroughbreds" and Protestants. The Faulknors were among America's first settlers. As Mrs. Cooper said of them, "I don't believe they landed on Plymouth Rock but they weren't too much later." In South Acton, Mass., stands the original old house of the first Faulknors,

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the Faulkner homestead, it is called. This was built in the 1670's and still contains many of the old furnishings and relics of early New England. It retains almost completely its old charm and sturdiness according to members of the family who attended the family reunion held there in 1936. They had a fine chance to inspect the place because the day scheduled for the celebration, the weather became very stormy and the entire proceedings had to go on inside the house. The members of the family were first interested in mill work and their choice of occupation of course had much to do with the gradual moving about of the family. The state of Connecticut with its early development of mills became the home of the Faulkner family we are tracing, first.

The Faulkner family was an intelligent, God-fearing group. They possessed and nurtured the desire for education and a natural thriftiness and ingenuity was traced and brought out clearly in their New England life. They boast no great men or women of note, that is men who rose above all others in the section but take just pride in a long line of substantial, worthy builders and workers. They were the best of earnest, worthy citizens who made a respected and unique group of states out of a section of country that could well have [beaten?] less hardy settlers and freedom-seekers. We can trace their growth and lineage definitely along the Connecticut River working upward. They do not sink to obscurity even to this generation. People know and remember them. Speak to many people and they will say. "Jerry Faulkner? Know him well. Fine fella!" Numerous others claim even distant relationship. Vermont probably has the greatest number of Falukners next to Massachusetts, members of whom are in Stamford, Readsboro, Whitingham, Jacksonville and numerous other communities. The family with whom our local character is connected has separated and come down into Colrain. Colrain has a large percentage of Vermont people now and they helped settle [them?] in the beginning.

"Jerry" Faulkner, uncle to our Lyman Faulkner, lived in Readsboro, Sermont Vermont . He had a fine farm and "drove stage" from his home to North Adams. That is, he drove the line from there himself but he hired a man named "Cripple" Smith to bring the route from Readsboro "City" to his home in Heartwilville. People all along the way knew and

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depended on Jerry. He "did the errands" of all his customers along the route and was never known to set a thing down. His niece said he might have twenty or thirty things to remember to do and have to get "anything from a bag of meal to a pair of baby's shoes." Shepherd Faulkner, always called "Shep", was Jerry's brother. He ran a livery stable. Thus both men tended to go in occupations after chosen by the English here in America. Both men married Wilbur sisters. Keeping 5 their line English. Jerry had several children but only a boy, Leon and two girls lived. One of the girls, Cora, is the only one living now.

She hasn't made very much of her life, having married two unworthy men - according to the standards of the Faulkners who as they say "were pretty wellup." "Shep" Faulkner had a son Jerry and a daughter. The son, Jerry is an automobile salesman in Greenfield, Massachusetts now. A third brother, David Faulkner, brother of "Shep" and Jerry is the father of the present Faulkners in Colrain. He was Lyman's father. David was from Whitingham, Vermont, before he was married the first time. His second wife Martha Henrietta born April 9, 1856 was from Lebanon, New York.

David and Martha had several children also and four are living now. These children were all born in Vermont except one sister Armeda who was born in New York in 1873. Frank and Blanche (Mrs. Cooper) were born in Vermont, Vermont and Lyman was born in Guilford, Vermont.

Shortly after Blanche was born (she thinks her birth date in 1878) the family moved to Colrain. They lived first on what was called "The Hill."

It is Colrain Mountain now. They rented a house built by an artist. The "children" remember it so clearly. The artist had painted the panels around the huge old fireplace to simulate a swamp. Even the [?] door paneling carried out the decoration and to them it was beautiful.

However David and Martha and their family only lived there for two years. They no longer had money but their pride hadn't lessened any. They had moved away from friends and relatives in Vermont determined to keep respect and maintain themselves in their

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own way. Next they moved to what was known as the "old Henry Jason" place" past the old cemetery on the Mountain. David worked in the grist mill in town so they gradually moved closer to his work. They next moved to where Bolton Gleason now lives, to the old Lapierre place, then to where Fred Lyman's lives now. Their last move was to the place where they live now.

The mention of the dwellers in the homes in which the David Faulkner family lived is not significant except to townspeople. It is worthy of note however for it shows the gradual descent in the finances of the family. They began with a spacious, beautiful artist's home and in about fifteen or sixteen years they were taking their last stand in a little farm place in Foundry Village. They moved into this thirty-six years ago and Lyman Faulkner has kept the place. Jerry Faulkner's daughter came back to Jerry's old homestead in Heartwilville and is working hard to maintain it. Lyman and his sister and their brother Frank, who works as a hired man in Colrain, have kept this house thru very adverse circumstances. Lyman, however has actually stayed with it and kept it with his meager income at all times. The place needs painting but Lyman has kept most of the repairing done on the house itself. Lyman's folks are both dead now. His father, David, died in September, 1906, and his mother died in October of 1934. They both died in Colrain. When they have the annual Reunion of the Falkner family there will still be two boys and a girl from Colrain to attend. They are Lyman, Frank 7 and Blanche Faulkner (Cooper). Lyman doesn't know whether or not he'll go if is too far away. He isn't the "visiting" type anyway, anymore than his folks were. They were "brought up to be very choice of their friends." Mrs. Cooper said she never played with a French child until after she was twelve or thirteen. This was mainly because they were Catholic but they also felt they were not up to their family standards.

One cannot say that Lyman Faulkner is a degenerate. The family itself has lost its money which gave only temporal prestige and the only way that one may say that the family has degenerated is that they have not gone ahead with the opportunities and conveniences of the modern world. Their fathers who came here in the 1600's had nothing and made something but these have had much and done little in accordance. Lyman received some

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education but he was painfully bashful and he soon chose to [?] devote his time to a paper route of Sunday newspapers he was building up. He helped his father with some farm work (they never had a large farm - just large enough to serve their own needs.) He learned some masonry from a mason in town and has worked some with it. The one "duty" or work that he has attended to faithfully has been his paper route. It takes in all the territory around the river, the North which winds widely from one settlement to another. He buys the papers in Shelburne Falls and begins delivery on the way back. Not one Sunday in over forty years has he missed his round trip, winter or summer. He has a small sleigh in the winter and a buggy in the summer. Two of his expressions which are well known in town are, 'ell, guess suts time to put ta sail (sleigh) away and get out ta wagan" and his, "Ma buggy get 'tuck in a mud in a 'p'ingtime."